

03/28/2015 – C.R.I.M.E. Program Informational Session - Event LOG

Chief R. Myers: Welcomed all.

Mayor M. Price. Have buy-in from all levels of the community. Feeling of our sense of community is beyond the talk stage. We have stats. "As witnessed by your presence, we are at the action stage." Hopes each person will help improve the community. People generally love our City. They tend to stay. Hopes everyone is ready to engage and help do on an individual basis for the community to move forward.

City Mgr. J. Bourey: Here to say two things: "Thank you for being here; thank you for doing what you do for our community; thank you for what you are going to do for the community."

C.A. H. Gwynn: "When is the community going to rise up and say enough is enough? We all want to be safe in our communities."

Sheriff G. Morgan: Remarked on over 20 years of service in the military. Just as he was willing to fight for his country, he is willing to fight for his community.

Meeting Facilitator P. Bellmio:

Powerpoint of program process – how it works, what is entailed, what is needed.

Open Forum - Speakers:

Speaker #1 Question: Expressed his fear of the actions of some police. Experience in the workplace taught him that in order to move up, a person has to do something. He feels that sometimes, citizens have to have protection against the police. A mention was made of recent excessive force experiences across the nation. The speaker felt that there is pressure for officers to do something, and the speaker expressed fear of a recent event where an elderly black person was stopped, dragged out of car and beaten, precipitated by driving a Cadillac in the wrong neighborhood. This was not in Newport News. The speaker felt that many of the things experienced in Ferguson are endemic across the country. The question, "Is there pressure on the police officers for police to move their way up?"

Mr. Bellmio: Promotion for an officer should be based on what officers do on prevention and intervention. It should not only be based on enforcement. That is what it takes to get people promoted.

Chief Myers: Did not speak from any historical perspective due to his time in service in Newport News, but spoke for the time he has been in the city. The current primary focus is on problem solving. Focusing on the root causes of problems. Focusing on crime prevention. If a pattern is identified that requires arrests, the department looks at what is being done on other events that are the root causes of the problems. The #1 complaint in neighborhoods is speeding. The job of the police extends past just statistical numbers. Officers are told to get out of the car and talk to people. The first question/statement to a citizen does not need to be, "Give me your ID."

Speaker #2: Representative from the Crime Watch Coalition. Expressed excitement regarding the process, and suggested a website where the process' progress can be viewed.

NNPD Webmaster: Acknowledged the merits of the idea and indicated the webpage would be created. (NOTE: Please see <http://www.nnva.gov/1908/CRIME-Project>)

Speaker #3: Engaged in gang prevention with Boys & Girls Club. Since returning to the City, the speaker has seen gangs here that have connections to major national gangs. An example of recent violent confrontation with gang members was given. A newspaper article was read, citing the "Family Virtue" program.

Mr. Bellmio: Requested input from the other adults with Speaker #3, who were parents and children of the Aqueduct Apartment area.

Speaker #4: Patrol needs to be increased at Aqueduct Apartments. There is violence occurring that is caused by people who do not live there.

Speaker #5: More police patrols are needed. There are too many shootings.

Speaker #6: (Newport News High School Student) Aqueduct Apartments have been a dangerous area.

Speaker #7: (Newport News High School Student). The speaker expressed that he feels unsafe in his community.

Speaker #8: The speaker spoke of an observation as she drove down Warwick Boulevard. When Oyster Point Road is reached, the landscape changes. There is a marked difference from the other end of the City. It is important that when changes are made, they are made throughout the City.

Speaker #9: (Representative of NNRHA) NNRHA works as a resource for the City. The community needs to work together for one community. Community members need to work with City. The City has a 5-Year Plan, and input from citizens is greatly needed.

Speaker #10: (Representative of NNRHA) Reaffirmed what Speaker #9 was referencing. Speaker #10 expressed that he would like to see more participation in NNRHA programs. NNRHA works closely with PD. The speaker respects fear, and its effects, but stressed that it is the apathy of residents in housing complexes that hurts community, as well as an attitude of "no snitching".

Speaker #11: The speaker stated she is involved with working on the City's comprehensive plan, and "People to People". She stated that attendees might find it useful to review the City's and People to People's website to see what the issues are (<http://www.nnp2p.org/>, <http://www.nnva.gov/1763/Comprehensive-Plan-Update>).

Speaker #12: (Substitute teacher) The speaker indicated she has encountered some students who are at unrest. A suggestion was made for youth security program to address program that deals with fear to help students learn. Children need direction on how to handle anger and not become involved in the wrong activities and groups to cope.

Speaker #13: (Neighborhood Watch) The speaker indicated that she stands outside her apartment and monitors students getting off the school bus. The speaker indicated a desire to see the drug "spice" so she can tell what it looks like.

Speaker #14: (Board of Directors for B&G Club) The Boys and Girls club has a unit in Aqueduct Apartments.

Speaker #15: Drugs are lot of the problem in the community.

Speaker #16: (NNPS) The speaker indicated that she tries to talk to students to get an idea of what they are thinking and the activities in which they're involved.